

*Testimony Submitted to the Appropriations Committee:*

H.B. No. 6824: An Act Concerning The State Budget For The Biennium Ending June Thirtieth 2017,  
And Making Appropriations Therefor And Other Provisions Related To Revenue.

Submitted By: **Eileen Supernois, Mother of an individual with Down Syndrome**

**Public Hearing March 6, 2015**

Senator Bye, Representative Walker and distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee, my name is **Eileen Supernois**.

I would like to share my concerns with H.B. 6824, An Act Concerning The State Budget For The Biennium Ending June Thirtieth 2017, And Making Appropriations Therefor And Other Provisions Related To Revenue. In particular, I wanted to express my sincere concerns to the funding reductions in the H. B. No. 6824. This funding reduction would threaten **critical services** to individuals and families in our service area.

“My son is 21 years old and in June 2015 will officially age out of the Stratford School System. He currently is attending a program through the Kennedy Center called Project 20. When my son was turning 12 years old, he started puberty. Unfortunately with the change came “behaviors/ rages” that he had NO CONTROL over. He was hospitalized at Yale Psychiatric Children’s Unit for 3 months which took a huge toll on both of us. Upon his discharge DDS was able to put funding into place so I could continue to work to support my son. With this funding we have a service come in daily which helps Alex with his Behavior Plan, rages, etc. Since Alex has been home and with the help of doctors, therapists, agencies and programs my son is able to go into the community without any issues and has been learning to become as independent as he possibly can and prepare him for the future when I am no longer on this earth to care for him. If we lose the funding for my home help and for Alex’s day program I will no longer be able to work or provide a roof over his head as well as feed and clothe him. My son is one of the most kindest loving people I have ever known. No matter where he goes, someone knows him and will shake his hand, give him a high five or a hug. We have fought long and hard to get Alex to where he is now. If we were to lose this funding I don’t even want to think of where he would be. I am begging you PLEASE don’t allow these cuts to go through. My son is NOT capable of taking care of himself and these cuts would DEEPLY IMPACT everything we have worked so hard to accomplish.”

The proposed cuts, coupled with four rounds of rescissions/budget modification dating back to late 2012, have put enormous pressure onto an already severely depleted system. The reality is that nonprofit providers have been pushed to our breaking point due to the lack of investment over the past two decades. Chronic underfunding has already forced many nonprofits to close, compete against one another for scarce resources, layoff employees, reduce benefit packages; altogether creating a win or lose system that weakens the entire nonprofit sector and threatens its sustainability.

As members of the Appropriations Committee work toward creating your ‘Recommended Budget’ for SFY16 and 17, I urge you to restore these harmful cuts to ensure critical programs and services are available to the residents of Connecticut. I’d also like to respectfully remind you that investing in the nonprofit sector will improve service delivery, increase economic activity, and save taxpayer money; a

“win-win” for policymakers working to strengthen the economy, the nonprofit workforce trying to make ends meet, and most importantly, the clients and their families who count-on efficient, cost-effective, and high-quality services in our communities.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions, or for additional information.

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